

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

Course Title, Time and Location	Course Code Number	Credit Value
Sex, Gender and Philosophy Mon, Wed, Fri 12-1 PM View in Workday	PHIL 334 001 W1 2024	3 credits

Course Instructor	Contact Details	Office Location	Office Hours
Dr. Willow Verkerk	willow.verkerk@ubc.ca	BUCH E 158	Mon, Wed 3-4 PM

OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Xiaoyan Huang

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the philosophy of sex and gender in three steps. It first looks at how the human subject in the history of philosophy is sexed and privileged as a man. It then examines the metaphysics of gender, questioning both essentialist and constructionist versions of gender ontology. Lastly, it pursues the question of intersectionality and its relationship with sex and gender. This is an in-person lecture style course with class discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Students are expected to read the materials before class and come prepared to take part in class discussion. The schedule includes all of the readings which can be found in the Library Online Course Reserves (LOCR).

ASSESSMENTS OF LEARNING

Take Home Exam 1 (750 words) 20% posted September 27; *Due September 30.*

Take Home Exam 2 (750 words) 20% posted October 25; *Due October 28.*

Final Essay (3000 words) 50% posted November 6; *Due December 6.*

Participation 10%: based on attendance and participation in class and/or during office hours

Self-assessment 1: 5% posted October 14; *Due October 18*

Self-assessment 2: 5% posted December 2; *Due December 8.*

All assignments are submitted on Canvas.

SCHEDULE: MON, WED, FRI 12-1 PM

Introduction: Sex, Gender, and Feminist Methodologies

Wednesday **September 4**: Thinking Sex and Gender: An Introduction

Friday September 6: Feminist Curiosity with Perry Zurn

Read: "Feminist curiosity," in *Philosophy Compass*, 2021.

Monday September 9: Thinking about Feminist Curiosity and Philosophical Methodologies

Read: "Feminist curiosity," in *Philosophy Compass*, 2021.

Part I: A Critique of the Sexed History of Philosophy

September 11-13: The Androcentric Human of Philosophy: A Critique

Read: Adriana Cavarero, "Introduction," in *Inclinations: A Critique of Rectitude*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016, pp. 1-15.

September 16-20: Sexed Verticality and the Autonomous Subject

Read: Cavarero, Chapters 1-3 in *Inclinations*, pp. 17-44.

September 23-27: Homo Erectus

Read: Cavarero, Chapters 4-7 in *Inclinations*, pp. 46-79.

Take Home Exam 1 posted September 27

September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (no class)

Take Home Exam 1 due September 30

October 2-4: Becoming Inclined or How to Rethink the Subject of Philosophy

Read: Cavarero, Chapters 9, 10, pp. 89-106 and Chapter 12 pp. 121-131 in *Inclinations*.

Further reading: Willow Verkerk, "A Re-evaluation of the Androcentric Subject of European Philosophy," *Critical Horizons*, 2023.

Part II: Gender Ontology

October 7-11: No in-person classes (See Zoom and recorded lectures)

Sex, Gender, and Desire

Read: Chapter 1 sections I to IV, pp. 3-22 in Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York/London: Routledge, 1999.

Holiday October 14- Thanksgiving Day (Self-assessment 1 posted)

October 16-18: Identity, Sex, and Language

Read: Chapter 1 section V and VI, pp. 22-44 in *Gender Trouble*.

Self-assessment 1 due October 18

October 21-25: Sex, Gender, and Performativity

Read: Chapter 3 section IV "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions" pp. 163-180 in *Gender Trouble*.

Take Home Exam 2 posted on Friday October 25

* Take Home Exam 2 Due October 28*

October 28-November 1: Gender Regulation

Read: Chapter 2 "Gender Regulations" pp. 40-56 in *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

AND Chapter 1 "Coming to Terms with Transgenderism and Transsexuality" pp. 23-34 in Julia Serano, *Whipping Girl: A transexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*. Berkeley: Seal Press, 2007.

November 4-8: Gender Trouble Still: Biopolitics

Read: Isabell Dahms, "Always trouble: Gender before and after Gender Trouble," *Radical Philosophy* 2.09 (Winter 2020-21), pp. 41-54.

Final Essay topics posted November 6

Part III: Sex, Gender, and Intersectionality

Midterm break November 11-13

Watch: Ted Talk, "The urgency of intersectionality" (*trigger warning for violence against women*)

https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en

November 15: Discussion Day**November 18-22: Intersectionality**

Read: Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review*, Vol. 43. 6 (July 1991), pp. 1241-1299.

AND Brittney Cooper, "Intersectionality," in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*. OUP: 2016.

November 25-29: Intersectionality and Feminism

Read: Cooper "Intersectionality" continued

AND Ahmed, Sara, "Chapter 1: Feminism is Sensational" in *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

December 2-6: Intersectional Feminisms and Indigenous Knowledge Practices

Read: Ahmed continued

AND Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy" in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*, University of Minnesota Press, 2020.
Self-assessment 2 posted December 2

December 6 Final Essay due

December 8 Self-assessment 2 due

LEARNING OUTCOMES

During the course, students will learn concepts central to the philosophy of sex and gender in feminist, queer, transgender, and antiracist philosophy. They will practice talking and thinking critically about the arguments and ideas. The take home exams provide the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of the key concepts studied to date. The final paper is an exercise in critical thinking to explore and deepen understanding of one or more of the thinkers studied during the course. By the end of the semester, students will be familiar with key figures and themes in the philosophy of sex and gender.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND SUPPORT

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

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<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

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